

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

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R 231137Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3712

INFO CINCPAC

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 12022

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PFOR, CH,UR

SUBJECT: KAPITSA ON SOVIET HELICOPTER CREW

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR (PLIMSOLL) REMARKED TO US ON AUGUST 21 THAT HE FOUND INTERESTING THE POSITION TAKEN IN CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM BY KAPITSA (CHIEF OF MFA'S FIRST FAR EASTERN DIVISION) ON THE HELICOPTER CREW BEING HELD BY THE CHINESE. PLIMSOLL SAID THAT DURING A CONVERSATION IN JUNE, KAPITSA HAD REMARKED THAT IF THE CHINESE DID NOT RELEASE THE SOVIET CREW, THE SOVIETS "HAVE WAYS TO RETALIATE." PLIMSOLL AGAIN BROUGHT UP THE ISSUE WITH HIM ON AUGUST 19, AND ASKED WHAT "WAYS" HE MIGHT HAVE HAD IN MIND. KAPITSA REPLIED THAT CHINESE AIRCRAFT OFTEN OVERFLY THE FRONTIER OF THE SOVIET UNION. IT WOULD BE SIMPLE TO FORCE ONE DOWN AND HOLD THAT CREW UNTIL THE CHINESE WERE READY TO MAKE THE EXCHANGE.

2. COMMENT: WE HAVE OUR DOUBTS THAT CHINESE AIRCRAFT DO IN FACT OVERFLY THE SOVIET BORDER AND SUSPECT THAT CHINA EXERCISES
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GREATEST CAUTION IN THIS REGARD.

STOESSEL

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NNN

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